



# **Maine Farm Safety Program**

Bulletin #2313

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## **Hazards In and Outside the Home**

Safety inside the home is as important as safety on the farm. Serious accidents happen each year in and around the home. Falling, lawn mowing and using pesticides are major contributors to these accidents.

### ◆ **Falls in the Home**

There are several ways to prevent falls in the home. Clean up spills promptly and remove obstacles from the floor. Apply nonskid backing to loose rugs, banisters and stairs. Nonskid strips should be applied to bathtubs and showers to prevent slipping.

### ◆ **Lawn Mowing Safety**

Lawn mowing can be dangerous if one is not careful. Read the instruction manual. Know the various parts of the machine and what they do. Check for any additional safety instructions.

Wear the proper clothes for the job. Substantial shoes, long pants

and close-fitting clothes are a minimum. Eye and ear protection are recommended. (See the fact sheet entitled "Work Clothing on the Farm - Non-PPE" for additional information.) Take time to teach an inexperienced person the proper mowing procedure. Go over possible situations.

Fill the gasoline tank outdoors and away from possible ignition sources. Wipe up spills and do not smoke while gasoline is being used. Store gas in an approved container away from the house. Fill up before

### **Hazards In and Outside the Home**

- ◆ **Keep walkways clear to avoid falls.**
- ◆ **Push a lawn mower across slopes; drive a mower up and down slopes.**
- ◆ **Never use food containers to store gasoline, pesticides or any other poison.**



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starting, while the engine is cold. Do not forget to replace the gas cap snugly. When using lawn mowers, wait 10 minutes for the machine to cool before refueling.

Mow in good light so you can see clearly. Do not mow wet grass. There is a greater risk of slipping. Check the lawn for objects that may have been left behind by someone working in the yard, children or pets. The fast moving blade can propel objects with incredible speed. Keep children and pets out of the mowing area. Allow no riders on mowers because of the risk of an accident. Be sure the blade has stopped completely before leaving the mower. Never leave the mower while the engine is running.

When mowing on slopes, you must consider the mower type in use. Mow up and down the slope when using riding mowers. Move back and forth across the slope when using a push mower. This gives better control of the mower and reduces the chance of coming into contact with the mower if you lose control, slip or fall.



#### ◆ **Snow Blower Safety**

Before the first snowfall, clear the areas where the snow removal is to take place, removing large stones, sticks, toys and other objects. Mark such obstacles as driveway markers and water and gas shut-offs so their locations under the snow are obvious. Adjust the collector housing height to assure clearance above gravel or rock surfaces before operation. Shut off the engine and wait for attachment blades to stop before clearing the auger or discharge chute. Disengage the attachment and stop the engine before changing the position of the deflector. Do not clear snow across the face of slopes because of the possibility of tipping over.

#### ◆ **Gasoline**

Gasoline must be properly stored around the home. Use only approved gasoline containers. Never put gasoline in empty drink or food containers. Clean up any spills immediately. Never leave gasoline containers where children can have access to them. Always close gasoline containers and put them away when finished using them.

#### ◆ **Home and Garden Pesticides**

When using pesticides around the home and in the garden, you should take several safety measures. These safety

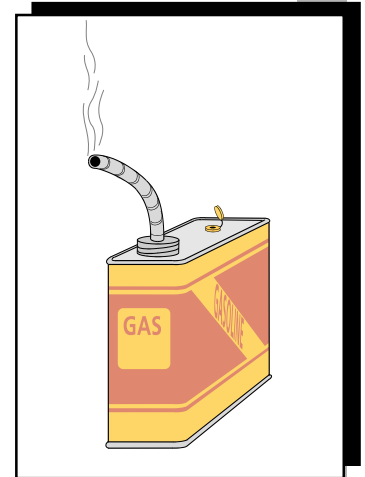


measures are very similar to those used when dealing with commercial pesticides on the farm. For more detailed information, see the section on pesticides.

When pesticides are needed outside the home, begin by determining what insect, weed or disease is causing the problem. Decide if a pesticide is needed. Often problems can be controlled through mechanical or cultural means. If a pesticide is needed, then choose the right one for the job. Read the label and follow all the directions. Wear proper clothing when mixing and applying the pesticide. Be sure to apply it as directed, and put away any unused portions. When finished, carefully put away

applying equipment and leftover pesticides. Properly dispose of empty containers.

When working with pesticides in the home, there are several things to remember. Put away food that may come in contact with the pesticide. Discard any food that comes in contact with pesticides. Manufacturers suggest vacating the area being sprayed for several hours after application. Be very careful when applying the pesticides. Wear the proper protective clothing, and do not get any of the pesticide on bare skin. If you are using rodent traps or ant baits, put them where children won't get at them and check them regularly.





**This Maine Farm Safety Fact Sheet is part of an educational fact sheet series produced by the University of Maine Cooperative Extension. For more information on farm safety, contact your county Extension office.**



Published and distributed in furtherance of Acts of Congress of May 8 and June 30, 1914, by the University of Maine Cooperative Extension, Vaughn H. Holyoke, Director for the University of Maine Cooperative Extension, the Land Grant University of the state of Maine and the U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating. Cooperative Extension and other agencies of the U.S.D.A. provide equal opportunities in programs and employment. 7/95



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